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Amendments to the Specification:

Please prepare paragraph [0021] on page 4, lines 21-29, as follows:

Evaluating the degradation map 100 with respect to the degradation rate variance 202 generates a range of usage patterns and wear rates of the tensile support and produces a range of minimum tensile support strength and/or maximum loss in ~~breaking~~breaking strength (LBS) 204, which reflects the maximum amount that the tensile support strength can be degraded. More particularly, the maximum LBS can be determined by detecting the point in the degradation map at which the tensile support strength is the lowest, after taking the degradation rate variance 202 into account, and then using this point as the maximum LBS value 204. The maximum LBS 204 indicates the point at which the tensile support would break if placed under extreme load.